Worthy Walking:

Preſſed upon all that have heard

THE

CALL

OF THE

GOSPEL:

FROM

Epheſ. 4. 1. *I therefore the priſoner of the Lord beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*

By *Nathanael Vincent*, being the firſt Sermons he preached after his enlargement.

LONDON,

Printed for *Thomas Parkhurſt*, at the Bible and three Crowns in *Cheapſide*, near *Mercers*-Chappel. 1671.

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The Epistle to the Reader.

Reader,

MUch hath been both Preached and Printed, to arm thee against Suffering. My aim in these few Sheets, is to perswade thee to Do, what is so much for thy own good, as well as for the honour of thy Lord; and crediting the profession which thou makest. If thy Religion lyes only in thy tongue, and talking; thy Religion is but vain. That mouth of thine, though it speak many good words; will at the Great Day be stop't by the Righteous God; who will judge, not according to the words spoken, but the works that have been done by thee.

If thy heart is deluded, and thou art strengthened in that delusion; because forward to suffer; what doth this suffering signifie, as long as prayer, praising, searching the Scripture, partaking of the Supper, and other duties, so needful as well as delightful, are

omitted; and which is worse, that omission pleaded for? Christ not only suffered evil, but went about doing good: He that writes after this Copy cannot do amiss.

Religion that hath a long time lain a bleeding, now seems to lye a dying. Doth it not concern all Professors to contribute their utmost help, to keep Religion alive in the world? Now the best way to uphold it, is to practise it. Walking worthy of the Gospel, is the readiest course to make the Worth of the Gospel evident; which had never found so many Enemies, if pretending friends, had been but friends really, both to the Gospel and themselves. Walk worthy of thy calling, else thou canst not be called truly Wise. Christ likens the Hearer of the Word that would not do it, unto a foolish man that did build his house upon the sand. *And if thou art barely a Professor of Religion, but indeed a Worker of iniquity, thou wilt prove thy self a most egregious fool; by erecting thy hopes of happiness without any solid foundation, and undoing of thy soul eternally.*

The Lord accompany this Writing by his Spirit! and if thereby, thy walk and progress be furthered in Heavens Way, what I desire will be attained.

Nathanael Vincent.

Worthy

Worthy Walking.

Epheſ. 4. 1.

I therefore the priſoner of the Lord beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.

YOUR Preacher was a Priſoner for you: the Priſoner is now again become a Preacher to you. He eſteems it a mercy that his *feet*; but much more, that his *tongue* is ſet at liberty. His ſilent Sabbaths were his great affliction: having food by him, he was ſorry he had not leave to diſpenſe it, when the Neceſſities of ſouls were ſo very preſſing. He hath often ſpoken for you unto God: now his own and your

prayers are heard, and he hath an opportunity of ſpeaking from God unto you. Hearken attentively, as you deſire the priviledge of hearing ſhould be vouchſafed. *A deaf and uncircumciſed ear, an obſtinate and rebellious heart, may conduce much to another confinement.*

Your Paſtor who is now reſtored, hath a great Requeſt to make unto you all: The granting of which, will indeed be joyful to him; but principally beneficial to your ſelves; and if you ask, what the Requeſt is: I anſwer; 'tis the ſame that the Apoſtle makes to the *Epheſians* in the Text, *I therefore the priſoner of the Lord, beſeech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*

The Apoſtle according to his uſual method, had in the former part of his Epiſtle explained the Myſterie of the Goſpel which had been hid from Ages and Generations; he had magnified and preached up the Grace of God in Chriſt: And having told them, how not only compleat forgiveneſs, but alſo ſpiritual ſtrength, and whatever elſe our emptineſs requires, may be had from the Son of God, whoſe riches are unſearchable. In the latter part of the

Epiſtle he deſcends to matters of practice.

By the way obſerve, *That before we preſs men to holineſs, we muſt endeavour to draw them to Chriſt*: for 'tis he alone, that can impower them by his Spirit, to obey the commands of the Goſpel. All obedience that comes not from faith in him, as it fails both in the end, and manner of performance; ſo it cannot be accepted. Firſt we muſt have a new being from Chriſt before we can work the works of God; 'tis impoſſible we ſhould bring forth good fruit till ingraffed into Chriſt the true Vine. Chriſt therefore here is in the firſt place preached, as alſo in other Epiſtles; and then afterwards walking in newneſs of life.

Before the Apoſtle comes to particular Precepts; to moderate our anger; to walk in love; to abhor uncleanneſs and covetouſneſs which is Idolatry; to redeem time, and to be conſcientious in doing the duties, which our ſeveral relations call for; in the Text he layes down a general Rule which with much patheticalneſs he urges upon them; namely this, *That they would walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called.*

The words contain an earneſt exhortation; where obſerve,

1. The perſons exhorted, *Called ones.*

2. What they are exhorted to; *to walk worthy of their vocation, or calling.*

3. The manner of exhorting; *the moſt affectionate way, namely, beſeeching.*

4. The perſon who exhorts; he is the Apoſtle who calls himſelf,

1. *A priſoner.*

2. *The priſoner of the Lord* he was for them Gentiles.

There are three things in the words which will need ſome explication.

1. What is the meaning of being a priſoner of the Lord? *Beza* explains it thus, *Domini cauſâ, propter negotium Domini.* A priſoner for the Lords ſake, or for doing the Lords buſineſs; that which men condemned, the Lord had commanded: that which men accounted his ſin, or his ignorant zeal, or fooliſh ſingularity; the Lord had made it his duty; and for doing this zealouſly and induſtriouſly, he was made a priſoner. But as he was a priſoner for Chriſt; ſo he was δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ *in the Lord Chriſt* while a priſoner; he was much more under the wing of Chriſt, than under

the power of his enemies: the union between Christ and him, held undissolved: enemies could not send him, where Christ either could not, or would not be with him.

2. What we are to understand *by Calling?* There is a twofold calling.

1. *That which is more general*; and in this sense *many are called*, and yet few even of these very called ones *are chosen*, Matth. 20. 16. Thus those simple ones, that loved simplicity, those fools that hated knowledge, were called to turn: but Wisdom complains, *I have called and ye refused, I have stretched forth my hand, but no man regarded; ye have set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof*, Prov. 1. 24, 25. And truly such as thus are called, are inexcusable, that they yield not to the call, that they live and act so unsuitably to the many warnings, rebukes, invitations, directions that are given them by the Ministry of the Gospel.

2. *That calling which is effectual*; when the sound of the Gospel being accented and made mighty by the Spirit, pierces further than the ear and brain; the conscience being indeed awakened, and the heart it

self

ſelf being ſo wrought upon, as to yield it ſelf unto the Lord. Thus they of *Macedonia*, when called, gave their own ſelves to the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. In this call there is not only a revelation of the Lord Jeſus, and an invitation to come to him; but there is a powerful traction and drawing of the ſoul to cloſe with, and readily to accept of him. And Chriſt being received, ſtrength is given forth from him, to walk in him. Col. 2. 6, 7. *As ye have therefore received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk in him; rooted and built up in him, and ſtabliſhed, &c.* Saints ſhould live like themſelves, as thoſe that are indeed called unto light and holineſs. This effectual calling is chiefly to be underſtood: only the thus called, can and will walk worthy of it.

3. The third thing to be explained is, *What is meant by walking worthy?* The word ἀξίως doth not import any worth or merit in our walking. Our walking follows after our calling, and therefore cannot merit the grace and priviledge of effectual vocation; and whatever rewards the Scripture ſpeaks of, and promiſes; are reckoned not of debt; but of meer grace. But, *Worthy*, here is as much as *meet* and

ſuitable.

suitable. *Beza* translates the word *Sicuti convenit*; walk so as is agreeable to your calling. There must be an answerableness in our conversation to our profession: we must not have the voice of *Jacob*, and the hands of *Esau*; but our works must correspond with that holy faith and rule, which we own and profess to walk according to.

Several Doctrines I shall raise from the Text, and in order handle them.

1. *'Tis not an unusual thing for a Preacher to be imprisoned.* The Apostle was in prisons frequent, because he was so much in preaching.

2. *If we are prisoners, it should be for Christ, and not for evil doing.* *Paul* calls himself a prisoner of the Lord, not for any wrong or injury he had done to any.

3. *'Tis not a matter of disgrace to be imprisoned for Christs sake, but of honour and glory.* *Paul* doth not conceal his bonds, but often speaks of them, and even glories in them. As Christ can sweeten the bitterest cup, and lighten the heaviest burden; so he can put a lustre upon what is most ignominious: 'tis not amiss to be any thing for Christ. Imprisonment for him, is infinitely better than liberty with the loss of him.

4. *A Ministers bonds should make his Doctrine and Exhortations the more heeded.* The Apostle uses his chains as an argument to chain the ears and hearts of the *Ephesians* faster to him, that they might give the better heed to the lively Oracles which he delivered.

5. *People are to be intreated and beseeched to their duty.* Not only commands, and threats, and rebukes, but sometimes entreaties must be intermingled.

6. *True Saints have been effectually called:* so they are here in the Text styled. Predestination first appears and discovers it self in calling: and as from effectual calling we may argue backward to Election, so likewise forward, to Glorification.

7. *'Tis the great duty of those that are called to walk worthy of their vocation.* To walk after another rate, than those that never heard the call of the Gospel, or never heeded it. And this I principally intend to handle, as that which is mainly by the Spirit intended.

Doct. 1. The first Doctrine is this; *'Tis not an unusual thing for a Preacher to be imprisoned.* Thus was *Jeremiah* the Prophet dealt with, *Jer.* 32. 2. He threatned

ſin with captivity and deſolation, and *Zedekiah* ſent him to priſon, notwithſtanding the truth of his meſſage, and his faithfulneſs in delivering it. He that was more than a Prophet *John* the *Baptiſt* had the ſame meaſure. 'Tis ſaid, *That* Herod *to his other evil deeds added this above all, that he ſhut up* John *in priſon.* The Apoſtles alſo were laid hands upon, *by the Chief Prieſt and thoſe that were with him, and put into the common priſon.* Acts 5. 18. becauſe they wrought cures upon the bodies, and preached ſalvation to the ſouls of men.

Now the *hand of God*, of *Satan*, and of *Men*, is to be eyed in this confinement of Miniſters.

1. *The hand of God himſelf is to be eyed.* If a Sparrow fall not to the ground without his Providence; ſurely without his Providence, a Miniſter is not thrown into a Goal. *What evil is there*, (that is) of affliction, *and the Lord hath not done it?* as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Amos* 3. 6. Though this muſt ever be acknowledged, that out of theſe evils, the Lord will extract *the Spirit of them as it were*; and that ſhall prove very good and medicinal to thoſe that love and fear him.

There

There may three Reaſons be aſſigned, why the Lord ſuffers his ſervant in the work of the Goſpel to be impriſoned.

1. *For Correction of the peoples unprofitableneſs.* In Miniſters ſilencing, the people may perceive, that they had not ſuch an hearing ear, as was meet, and was required. God uſually continues ſpeaking, while his voice is regarded and obeyed; if the Lord therefore ſtop the Paſtors mouth, it is to be feared, that the flock firſt began to ſtop their ears; or too little to heed what was delivered to them.

That is a very remarkable Scripture, Ezek. 3. 25, 26. *But thou O Son of man, behold they ſhall put bands upon thee, and ſhall bind thee with them; and thou ſhalt not go out among them. And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb; and thou ſhalt not be to them a reprover, for they are a rebellious houſe.* When ſinners continue rebellious againſt the Lord ſpeaking in his Prophets: when they will not turn at reproof; when they will not yield to be thorowly changed: for correction God may cauſe a ſilence; and 'tis well if that ſilence make them to awake, to fear, and bethink themſelves, and

and become willing to hear, ſuppoſe the Lord vouchſafe again to ſpeak to them.

2. *For the Miniſters own tryal and humiliation.* He is not worthy of the name of Chriſts ſervant, that wants not, his work, his honour and delight; when therefore he is taken off from ſo ſweet an employment; and for a while laid aſide: 'tis to make him reflect upon his heart and wayes; and that he may be deeply abaſed, becauſe of the too great prevalency of ſelfiſhneſs; and becauſe there hath been ſo ſmall a love to Chriſt and ſouls; ſo little zeal for God; which ſhould have been ſo fervent, as even to have conſumed *and eaten him up*, Pſal. 69. 9. He is tryed alſo by ſuch confinements, whether he can ſubmit to the will of him that's only wiſe; whether he will juſtifie the Lord; count it his glory to ſuffer; and be earneſt for Grace, better to improve liberty when it ſhall be reſtored.

3. The Lord ſuffers his ſervants to be impriſoned, *to raiſe in the peoples hearts an eſteem of Miniſtry and Ordinances.* That the ſlighting of the godly Miniſters has been a great ſin, for which God hath had a Controverſie with *England*, cannot but be granted:

granted: for this sin is written plainly in those severities enacted against them, by which they have been driven into corners. God permits them to be hindred from working, that the necessity of their labours being perceived, they may in love be the more highly esteemed. Most do look more upon the Sun in its Eclipse, than when it shines in its glory; and truly the light of the Gospel, is by many chiefly look't after, when there is some kind of Eclipse of that light, and they cannot tell but darkness may be near at hand.

When we want our spiritual priviledges, their worth is better apprehended: therefore the Lord suffers a scarcity; that the appetite of souls being recovered, a famine of the Word and of Ordinances may be prevented. When we have been for a season without Ordinances, and the Dispensers of them; and upon this deprivation find we have less of God; and that good things begin to decay, and are ready to dye: Oh then his house and his institutions will be prized: That will be our language. Psal. 27. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and*

to

to enquire in his Temple. We shall also cry out, *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and that publish the glad tydings of salvation.*

2. *The hand of Satan is also to be eyed in the imprisonment of Ministers.* And no marvel: for these discover his *Impurity*, his *Subtlety*, his *Enmity*, and *endeavour to dethrone him*, and set up the Kingdom of another.

1. *Ministers discover Satans impurity.* They declare what the Lord at first made him, even a glorious Angel; and what by sin he hath made himself: he is defiled and polluted in the greatest measure; he is unalterably confirmed in sin; and therefore is styled by way of wretched eminency, ὁ πονηρὸς, *the Wicked One.* Matth. 13. 19. *When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the Wicked One and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.* Satan is opposite and unlike to God as may be, and endeavours to hinder us from being like to him. Should such a Master be chosen before Christ, since where he dwells and rules he doth so very much defile? What filthy souls have all they that are the Devils drudges?

2. *Ministers discover Satans subtlety.* They are not ignorant of his devices, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. And they endeavour to make others know them and avoid them. They are in a special manner called Watchmen, not only in reference to God; to warn when the Lord is coming in a way of judgement, and to give notice, that sinners may prepare to meet him by serious humiliation and conversion: But in reference to Satan, they are Watchmen too; to tell the people of the snares he hath laid for them, to caution them against his temptations: They admonish frequently the souls committed to their charge, how able the Serpent is to beguile; and how they have need of a wisdom beyond their own, even the wisdom of Christ to withstand him. This causes the Devil to hate and to endeavour the confinement of those who speak so much against him.

3. *Ministers discover Satans enmity.* They tell how he walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. And what kind of destruction aims he at? Temporal only? No verily; in eternal perdition he would fain involve the children

children of men. Christ calls him a *Murtherer*; he was so from the beginning, and is so to this day; and 'tis the blood of souls he principally thirsts after.

That was desperate malice in the *Italian*, who meeting his enemy at an advantage, first compelled him for fear of death to blaspheme; and then presently stabbed him to the heart, saying, this is brave revenge indeed, for with one blow I have killed the body and damned the soul together. Such malice there is in Satan against every one, he would fain have the souls of all condemned for ever. This hatred Preachers discover, and are crying to their hearers to resist him; not to swallow his poisonous baits; and therefore he hates them peculiarly, wishes he had them all in dungeons, that they might never speak against him more.

4. *Ministers endeavour to dethrone Satan, and to set up the Kingdom of another, even of the Lord Jesus.* They would fain have their hearers brought to the acknowledgement of the truth, and to sincere repentance, *that they might recover themselves out of the Devils snare*, 2 Tim. 2. ult. As Christ was manifested in the flesh, that he might

destroy the works of the Devil, so they are perpetually manifesting Christ in the Gospel; that sinners may see the difference between him and Satan; between this Saviour and that Destroyer.

And how glad are they when they can pull a soul out of Satans hand! when they are instrumental to deliver any *from the power of darkness, and to translate them into the Kingdom of the Son of God.* No wonder the Devil strives to cast such into prison, who do strive to have those souls, which he hath enslaved, set at liberty.

3. The hand of men is likewise to be eyed in imprisoning the Lords messengers: and they are thus spightful upon several accounts.

1. Because of that hatred which they bear unto the light. Our Lord tells us, *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved,* John 3. 20. And hating the light, they persecute them who cause the light to flash in their faces. The nature of Light is to make manifest, Eph. 5. 13. The light of the word preached, makes the evil of sin manifest; it discovers the danger the ungodly are in; and makes often-

times

times a disturbance in their consciences; and where the heart remains unrenewed, an enlightned conscience is very burthensome; those Preachers that aim chiefly to touch the conscience, the wicked hate; *they cannot bear their words. They say to the Seers, see not,* because themselves are unwilling to see; and to the *Prophets, prophesie not unto us right things, prophesie smooth things*; else the Prophet shall be dealt roughly with.

2. *Men are thus spightful against the Lords Messengers*; *because of their hatred unto holiness.* The deep corruption and defilement of fallen man, makes his case sad; but his liking of his stains, makes him the harder to be made clean. And truly this is the property of every natural man, not only to sin, but to love sin. But holiness though abhorred by unrenewed Nature; the Word presses, and 'tis preached up by godly Ministers: hence 'tis they are persecuted, bringing a message so unwelcome to flesh and blood. The Ungodly cry out, *These are harsh injunctions; to abandon a sin that's advantagious; to mortifie a pleasing lust: These precise fellows, that cannot be quiet unless all the world become Saints, and*

holy as well as themselves, we cannot endure.

3. Men are thus spightful against the Lords Messengers; *because of those unreasonable prejudices they have conceived against them.* The ungodly are very apt to entertain prejudices against the servants of Christ; and Satan is not wanting to fill their hearts with, and to heighten such prejudices. They are easily seduced into a belief, that Ministers corrupt the Word of God for their own ends; *though as of sincerity, though as of God, in the sight of God they speak in Christ,* 2 Cor. 2. 17. They presently conclude from the falling of some, that all are alike, though not alike made manifest. They will make themselves believe, that we go about to undermine the State, and to bring all things to confusion: when indeed our design is to preach up him, *by whom Kings reign, and Nobles decree justice, and to turn mens feet into the way of peace.*

4. Men are thus spightful against the Lords Messengers, *because of their Satanical disposition, and desire to have others as wretched as themselves, and involved in the same condemnation.* Alas! how hath sin made

made the children of men enemies to God, to themselves, and to one another! Man is more than a Wolf, a Lyon, to his Brother: (these Beasts only tear the carkass) he is indeed become a Devil to his Brother; for he labours to draw his Brother into sin with him, and at length to Hell after him.

What's the reason that the sons of violence disturb not the Whore-houses, the Taverns, nor any Popish Conventicles? 'tis because they can with patience let men go to Hell. But they cannot endure, that Prophets should lift up their voices like Trumpets; to sound an alarum in token that God is coming to fight against them; the reason is, being resolved for ruine, they are unwilling others should be saved: upon this score also they confine Ministers, who thirst after the salvation of the souls that hear them.

I come now to the Application.

Use I. of Caution. *Take heed of contributing to the imprisonment of your Preachers.* If you are stubborn and will still be held in the cords of your sins; this may conduce much unto our bonds. Next unto our lusts, our carnal and careless hearers are

some of our worst enemies. Two wayes you may contribute unto the imprisonment of your Ministers,

1. *By not praying for them.* How earnestly doth the Apostle begg for prayers, Rom. 15. 30, 31. *Now I beseech you brethren for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea.* We shall not only preach better, but longer too, the harder you pray for us. As this is the way to keep up mutual love between Shepheards and their flocks, so the flocks prayers will make the Shepheards preaching more effectual. If you pray not hard, as you will profit little by us while you have us, so you may not have us long to profit by at all.

2. *By not practising what is pressed by them.* If the Lord sees that his messengers plough only upon the rock, he may take the plough out of their hand, or send them to plough upon other ground. The Spirit will not alwayes strive in the Prophets, if there *be not an ear to hear what he sayes unto the Churches.*

Vſe 2. of Advice. If Miniſters may be impriſoned; *Oh defer not to take the Watchmens warning:* while they may give it; do you take it. *Paul, and Apollo, and Cephas are yours*; yours to ſerve your ſouls, for Jeſus ſake: Make uſe of the Miniſtry while you enjoy it, ſince Earth and Hell are undermining it; and the not heeding it, may provoke the Lord to remove it. If you obey not the Prophets, you will know to your ſorrow, that Prophets have been among you. Two things I would here urge upon your conſciences;

1. *While we ſhew you your ſin, flee from it, that you may alſo flee from wrath.* To be told of your iniquity and to go on in it, is to ſin with an high hand. Perhaps I might never be impriſoned more: if I could but prevail with every tranſgreſſor here, to caſt away every tranſgreſſion. Your entertaining of the Goſpel, will do much towards my liberty to preach it. Oh that he who hath ſtollen, would ſteal no more! Oh that the Lyar would conſider the danger he is in of the Lake that burns with fire and brimſtone! And ſpeak the truth from his heart. Oh that the intemperate would no more be drunk with

the

the cup of excess, but be filled with the Spirit! Oh that the unclean would at length possess their Vessels in sanctification and honour, not in the lusts of concupiscence even as the Gentiles that know not God! Oh that you would consider, that the wages of sin is death; and sin unrepented of is alwayes crying in the ears of the righteous God, that its wages may be paid: the wrath of the Almighty is threatned, and will speedily fall, if they turn not, upon the children of disobedience, *Eph.* 5. 6.

2. *While we proffer Christ, accept of him.* We cannot proffer him while we are kept in prisons from you. O therefore now be perswaded to receive him. Whilst we are calling, Christ is knocking: Oh be prevailed with to open the door. The Lord Jesus hath certainly now his eyes upon every heart. The heart that's filled with pride, with lust, with covetousness, and wilfully shuts it self against Christ; he beholds with anger. The heart that's willing to receive him, he beholds with pity and with love. 'Tis not too late to open; it may quickly be too late. The day of grace may end, and prophecyings may cease before you are aware. While you have

have Miniſters to give you counſel, let their counſel be followed without any delay. Say to your Idols, *get ye hence*: Give a bill of divorce unto your luſts. Go out of your very ſelves. Accept of Chriſt, and become new creatures.

Doct. 2. The ſecond Doctrine is this; *If we are impriſoned, it ſhould be for Chriſt, and not for evil doing.* Whatever the under Shepheards, or the flock endure, we ſhould be all for cleaving to the Great Shepheard and Biſhop of ſouls, not for going aſtray from, and leaving the path appointed to walk in. The Reaſons are theſe.

1. *If we are priſoners for Chriſt; he will be ſure to viſit us.* As his withdrawings are doleful, ſo his viſits are exceedingly refreſhing. Though the place be a Den, a Cave, a Dungeon; the preſence of the Lord can *transfigure* it as it were; ſo that we ſhall ſay, 'tis good for us to be there. If Chriſt come and ſpeak peace by his Spirit; and as he did to his Apoſtle *Paul*, ſay, *Be of good cheer*; if he ſay, *My Brother, or my Siſter, know this to thine everlaſting conſolation, that my Father is thy Father, that my God is thy God*, John 20. 17. Preſently the

the ſoul will cry out, and not without ſufficient reaſons, *Kings and Emperours I envy not your high eſtate; your Crowns and Scepters cannot afford a pleaſure comparable to that wherewith my bonds are ſweetned.*

2. *But if we are priſoners for evil doing, the ſcandal will be great, and the diſcomfort likewiſe*; if enemies without accuſe, and conſcience within condemn; a mans Spirit will be loaded with a great burthen indeed; and as by evil doing eſpecially what is groſs, and expoſes to open ſhame, the conſcience is wounded; ſo alſo is Religion it ſelf, and that encreaſes the torment of the conſcience. Oh the harm Profeſſors do, when they ſwerve from the right way; inſtead of *putting to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men*; as the Apoſtle enjoyns, 1 *Pet.* 2. 15. they open their mouths wide in blaſpheming, and harden and confirm them in their folly.

Uſe 1. Let me exhort you to cleave unto the Lord whatever it coſt you. Thus *Barnabas* exhorted the Saints at *Antioch*, that they would cleave unto the Lord with purpoſe of heart. What we are capable of loſing by Chriſt, is but little compared with

with what we are certain to have, and ſecure by him. Our ſouls will be ſecured; an inheritance and Kingdom that's incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away is promiſed. Let this therefore be the thought and reſolution of thy heart. *Liberty is deſirable, but not ſo deſirable as Chriſt: Relations are dear, and ſo is a good name, but Chriſt is dearer. Life is ſweet, but Chriſt is ſweeter. I may be bleſſed though I want the one, I ſhall be accurſed for ever without the other.*

Uſe 2. *Beg to be delivered from every evil work.* Chooſe affliction rather than iniquity. The leaſt ſin that carnal fear betrayes you into, is infinitely heavier than the greateſt load that men can lay upon you. *Spira* thought it a dreadful thing to loſe his eſtate; but when he had denyed the truth which once he acknowledged and owned, Oh then he cryes out, that Racks and Wheels, and all other tortures were nothing comparable to the weight of ſin, and the anger of the great God attending it. Suffer for Chriſt; you will find him ſupporting you: if you ſuffer for ſin, 'twill ſink you in your ſuffering. Beg therefore to have your way made plain; turn not to the

the right hand, nor to the left; though Satan and the Flesh tell you never so often that 'twill conduce unto your safety.

Doct. 3. The third Doctrine is this, *'Tis not a matter of disgrace to be imprisoned for Christ, but of honour and glory.* As *Paul* in other places glories in being a servant of Christ, an Apostle of Christ; so here in being Christs prisoner.

This Doctrine will be evident, if we consider four things.

1. *The glory of Christ for whom we suffer.* He is called *the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. As to his Divine Nature he is styled *the brightness of his Fathers glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. 1. 3. And consider him as God-man, he is highly exalted, *and hath a name given him above every name, to which every knee must bow:* that is, *to his power and authority one way or other shall all be subject.* Now such a glorious Lord doth ennoble sufferings that are undergone for him: we should never be ashamed of following such a Master, whatever way he leads us in.

2. The

2. *The Spirit of glory resting upon us*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. If ye be reproached, and withheld as to imprisonment, for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. The Holy Ghost is here called *the Spirit of glory*, because he assures of that glory which is promised to the persevering believer; because he gives in that grace which is glory begun; and because he enables to such an holy magnanimity and braveness of carriage, as is beautiful and glorious in the eyes of beholders, and oftentimes marvelous to enemies themselves. Whatever the suffering Saints are esteemed, or whereever they are confined, the Spirit of glory dwells in them, vouchsafes to make them his Temples, 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. which is a dignity peculiar to them.

3. *The glorious Gospel which we own*: that Epithet is given to the Gospel, 1 Tim. 1. 11. *Paul* professes *he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*; he knew, *'twas the wisdom of God, and the power of God, though to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness.* Nature of it self could never have attained unto such wisdom as here is made

made manifeſt. The world by wiſdom knew not God. Nay, *the Angels* themſelves think the Goſpel a Myſterie very well deſerving that *they ſhould pry into it.*

And as the wiſdom diſcovered in the Goſpel is great, ſo how great is the efficacy of it! How glorious are the effects wrought by the Goſpel? Heb. 4. 12. *The word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two edged ſword:* 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. *The weapons of our warfare,* (and this ſword of the Spirit was one principal weapon the Apoſtle uſed) *are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought unto the obedience of Chriſt.* Such a Goſpel we need not be aſhamed to profeſs, though that profeſſion coſt us our liberty, nay, our very lives.

4. *The glory that is to be revealed.* We ſhall not alwayes lye among the pots. As our Lord had a double ſtate, that of humiliation, and that of exaltation; ſo there is a double ſtate of his members too. Chriſt at firſt was in the form of a ſervant; *his viſage was more marred than any mans,*

and

and his form more than the ſons of men, Iſa. 52. 14. But afterwards *when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, he ſate down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high*; he ſlighted the ſhame for the glories ſake. So believers, are now in their ſtate of humiliation; the world knows them not; looks upon them as the refuſe of mankind; but let them not be moved, or confounded, when by impriſonment and other tryals they are purged, they ſhall be exalted, and reign at Gods right hand for ever.

Uſe 1. To exhort all *to deſpiſe that ſhame which upon Chriſts ſcore is caſt upon them.* The worlds judgement is not to be valued; and truly their tongue is no ſlander; ſince the Prophets and Apoſtles, nay, Chriſt himſelf was ſo reproached, and unworthily handled. What though we are evil intreated, abuſed, caſt into bonds as evil doers? As long as God and conſcience tell us we have done our duty; we may count our ſhame our honour; and ſay to the world, as *David* did to ſcoffing *Michal*; *If this be to be vile, I will be yet viler.* This world is ſo miſtaken, ſo blinded, ſo corrupted; that their enmity is to be preferred before their friendſhip; and to

be ſpoken well of them is a bad ſign.

Uſe 2. To inform our adverſaries, *that they, not we, have reaſon to be aſhamed.* They declare their iniquity like *Sodom*, and conceal it not. Swearing, curſing, filthy communication, abominable intemperance, and adultery, are but light matters with them, in compariſon of praying and preaching; though not one word be ſpoken that hath the leſt factious tendency.

Omnia cum liceant, non licet eſſe pium.

'Tis lawful to be what we will almoſt, but holy. Are you not aſhamed of this, O ye enemies to God, to his people and your ſelves? Though at preſent you are impudent and hard hearted: you ſhall ſee and be aſhamed of your envy and hatred againſt the Saints. Your reſurrection at the laſt day will be to ſhame and everlaſting contempt, and with that ſhame the greateſt ſorrow and eternal horror will be joyned.

Doct. 4. *A Miniſters bonds and ſufferings, ſhould make his Doctrine and Exhortations the more heeded.* *Paul* not only here, but

but in other places draws an argument from this Topick, Philem. 8. 9. *Wherefore though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoyn thee that which is convenient; yet for loves sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as* Paul *the aged*, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. See also *Col.* 4. 18. to strike all the Nails of instruction home, which he had been driving in; he sayes, *Remember my bonds.*

The reasons why Ministers bonds and sufferings should make them the more regarded; are these.

1. *Their sufferings argue they believe what they preach, and are a seal unto their Doctrine.* The truths of the Gospel are so certain, that though never so many fall away from them, they must be owned; though Angels from Heaven should preach the contrary, we should not be moved; *but look upon Angels as accursed*, Gal. 1. 8. And though we suffer never so much, we must hold fast Truth. Now if Ministers are helped to be stedfast in asserting the truth, and liberty, and simplicity of the Gospel; that which they preach is the more to be regarded; this argues their sincerity; and that a greater blessing is likely to attend their labours.

2. *Their sufferings argue their love to Christ.* *Peter* when he thrice denyed Christ that he might decline suffering; Christ doth as often even *thrice* put the question to him, *Simon Son of* Jonas, *lovest thou me?* John 21. 17. That's a demonstration of our love to Christ, when we esteem neither liberty nor any other enjoyment so dear, as himself, and that Gospel he hath entrusted us withal. And as the Father himself honours them that love the Son, so should men honour them. Now what is the honour that good Ministers chiefly desire? Verily that they may be obeyed, when they preach the things which concern their hearers peace and salvation.

3. *Their sufferings argue their love to souls.* *Paul* calls himself a prisoner of Christ *for* the Gentiles, *Eph.* 3. 1. and he affirms that what he endured, was for the Churches sake. Col. 1. 24. *Who now rejoyce in my sufferings for you; and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his bodies sake which is the Church.* 'Tis for your good that we are thus exposed to the stroke of Law, and the edge of the Sword of Magistrates: We cannot

but

but teſtifie what we know; we cannot but endeavour to ſtop ſinners in the broad way, and warn them to flee from wrath, and come to Chriſt, and turn to God. We have a love to ſouls: and therefore let our carkaſſes endure hardſhip; ſo ſouls may be but ſaved. Hearken to them that thus do love you.

Uſe 1. To inform you of the *ſtrange obſtinacy of ſome Spirits, who let Miniſters ſay, or do, or ſuffer what they will, are reſolved not to yield.* Far be it from this Congregation, that ſuch ſtubborneſs ſhould be found here! Send me not away with a ſad heart to complain thus to God againſt you. *Lord I have exhorted, rebuked, intreated; nay ſuffered ſix moneths impriſonment; and yet could by no means prevail with ſuch and ſuch to leave their ſins, ſhake off their ſloth, and become followers of the Lamb in good earneſt. If reaſon might have heard and yielded to; ſtrong arguments have been urged. If telling them of their ſin and miſery would have awakened them; I have cryed aloud to make them know their tranſgreſſion, in order to their minding mercy and grace. If the Preachers being put in priſon, or ſhut up in a cloſe priſon, would have commended his*

meſſage, and made way for an obedient entertainment of it, both theſe confinements have been undergone. Oh hard heart that will not yield for all this.

Uſe 2. of Intreaty. *Let your Miniſter be now more than ever regarded.* Many arrows have been ſhot that have taken upon many hearts no more impreſſion, than if they had been ſhot againſt a wall of braſs. Oh now let not one word fall to the grouud! When I tell you of ſin, let every one conſent to turn it preſently out of doors: when I tell you of the ſpotting and enſnaring power of the world; let every one throw the world out of his heart and keep it under foot. When I exhort you unto duty, omit not duty for your lives. When I ſpeak of Chriſt, of his excellency and fulneſs, let every Chriſtleſs ſinner cloſe with and ſubmit unto him. And let every one that hath received him, cry to receive more of his unſearchable riches. Such obedient hearers what an encouragement would they be unto their Preacher. He would be glad that ever he was a priſoner, if his preaching hath but more ſucceſs than ever.

Doct.

Doct. 5. The fifth Doctrine is this, *People are to be intreated and beseeched to their duty.* I beseech you, saith the Apostle here, that ye walk worthy. So Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you therefore Brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* Entreaties and beseechings are more likely to prevail.

1. *Because of the condescension herein appearing.* Condescension in God that is so high, should work upon us that are so mean. Doth the Lord need us? No. Are we profitable to him? No. Oh wonderful, that he should fall to entreaties. As he is infinitely high above us, so he hath been highly affronted by us; yet he first makes the motion of peace, and beseecheth us to accept the motion, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. We should wonder if a King should entreat a Beggar that hath plaid the Traitor, to accept a pardon, and rebell no more: and should we not marvel at the Caitiffs folly, if he should proudly despise the Princes entreaties?

2. Intreaties are more likely to prevail, *because of the love herein expressed.* Gods beseeching, argues his kindness and compassion to the Sons of men. Doth he entreat them to do any thing that is against their interest? No, but what's highly for it. He beseeches them to turn out of the way of death; not by working iniquity to run headlong to Hell; to come to himself who can satiate the weary, and repleniſh the sorrowful, to accept of his Son, and pardon, grace, and glory with him, and is there any harm in all this?

3. Intreaties are more likely to prevail; *because of the encouragement herein given.* If the Lord beseech you to come, do not doubt of his willingness to receive you. There is great footing for faith in these Gospel entreaties. A great many good souls though they grant that God is able to forgive them, and to give grace to them; yet whether he *will* or no, they make a question. But his willingness is evidently demonstrated by his entreaties. They said to the blind man, Be of *good comfort, rise he calleth thee*: much more if Christ had *entreated him* to come for sight. We may say

ſay to ſenſible ſouls, that prize pardon, and healing, and ſpiritual ſtrength: Be of good comfort, *The Lord beſeeches you to come for pardon, to come for healing, to come for ſtrength to walk worthy of your calling.*

Uſe 1. *Be not deaf to entreaties.* God may quickly ſpeak and deal after another manner with you. While he takes the gentle path, go and meet him, and fall down before him. If you go frowardly on, he may uſe a ſevere method. He may ſpeak terrible things in your ears; *he may write bitter things in your conſciences, Job* 13. 26. Deſpiſed kindneſs, will cauſe the greater anger. If the ſtill ſmall voice be not heard; there may be ſent a ſtrong wind to fan you, there may be an earthquake to cauſe your hearts to quake and tremble: there may be a fire of judgements and afflictions exceeding hot, to try if by foul means you will be purged.

Uſe 2. *Be directed as to your intreaties and ſupplications.* The Lord beſeeches you to be reconciled; do you beſeech him to be at peace with you. *He beſeeches you to abſtain from fleſhly luſts*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. Beſeech him by his Spirit to mortifie them.

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He beſeeches you to walk worthy of your vocation: Oh beſeech him *to cauſe you to walk in his Statutes* as he hath promiſed, *Ezek.* 36. 27. Certainly if he firſt intreat you to accept his bleſſings, he will not ſtop his ear, nor ſhut his hand when you beg for them. And as the entreaties of God are a direction to prayer; ſo an encouragement to be frequent in this moſt ſweet duty. We have not to do with one that is inexorable; but he beſpeaks our prayers by beginning to pray himſelf. Oh with what confidence may we draw near to ſuch a God.

Uſe 3. To inform us, *that all means are to be uſed to gain upon the ſouls of men.* We are to threaten, if by that means we may work upon their fears: we are to intreat, if that way we may prevail upon their ingenuity. 'Twas the ſaying of an eminent Divine, *The converſion or building up of one ſoul is worth an age of pains.* The truth of this will be evident, if we conſider the worth of a ſoul, (Chriſt that went to the price of ſouls, values a ſingle ſoul before all the world) and the worth and everlaſtingneſs of that ſalvation which the ſoul converted is made heir unto; and the

the endleſneſs and greatneſs of that wo and miſery 'tis delivered from. Let us not therefore think much to preach, to pray, to labour, to intreat, to ſuffer; if precious ſouls may be but wrought upon effectually; our labour and pains cannot to better purpoſe be beſtowed.

Doct. 6. The ſixth Doctrine is this, *True Saints have been effectually called.* So the believing *Epheſians* are termed in the Text. Frequently in Scripture the godly are ſtyled κλητοὶ *called ones*: and the whole body of Chriſt, the Church is named ἐκκλησία, that is to ſay, a company called out of, and ſeparated from the reſt of the world. And ſuch as are not only of *Iſrael*, but *Iſraelites* indeed; are not only in appearance, but in truth.

In the handling of this Doctrine, I ſhall tell you the way and manner how the Lord calls thoſe whom he intends to ſave. Secondly, Wherein the truth of this calling lyes. Thirdly, The reaſons why he calls. Fourthly, Cloſe with the Uſes.

In the firſt place I am to tell you, *the method and manner how the Lord calls them whom he intends to ſave.* He doth much more

more than cauſe the Goſpel to be ſounded in their ears: the high-way ground hearers had the Word preached, but underſtood it not, for they did not regard it: thoſe compared to ſtony and thorny ground went further, but the good ground exceeded all the reſt. The other hearers had a call, had the ſame ſeed ſown, the ſame means vouchſafed; but the good ground hearers only were called ſo powerfully, as to be wrought upon ſavingly.

Now the manner of the Lords calling ſinners effectually, I ſhall explain in theſe particulars.

1. Thoſe whom the Lord calls, *he opens their eyes.* We may truly ſay, the falling off the ſcales from *Pauls* eyes when *Ananias* came to him, *Acts 9.* 18. was not ἄσημον, a thing without ſignification. There are in a ſenſe ſcales upon the mind of every man that is meerly natural, which hinder him from ſeeing; and ſo from being acquainted with himſelf, or with God, with his loſt eſtate, or with the means of his recovery. In the firſt place therefore the Spirit opens the eyes of the underſtanding: he that is called is no longer blinded by the God of this world, ſo as to do he knows not what, ſo as to go he knows not whither.

2. Thoſe

2. Those whom the Lord calls, *he awakens their consciences.* He cryes, *Awake thou that sleepest*, Eph. 5. 14. and the soul is made to hear his voice. As sleep is the locking up of the external senses, so the sleep of the conscience implies insensibleness: Many are past feeling; others are not come to have any feelling. But when conscience is indeed rouzed thorowly out of its sleep, 'tis hugely active; 'tis not barely informed; but acts as a Witness, as a Minister; nay, as a Judge under the Lord himself; and reproaches, accuses, condemns, though before it seemed to connive almost at every thing. The conscience being awakened, is made tender; and feels the wounds which sin hath left behind it; so that doing wickedly, can no longer be made light of.

Conscience hath a great influence unto the obeying of the call of God, because it sides with the Lord: it sides with the Ministry; and is never truly quieted till purified and pacified by the blood of Jesus.

3. Those whom the Lord calls, *he sets sin in order before them*; Psalm 50. 21. *These things hast thou done and I kept silence, and thou*

thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf (that is, took as little notice of, was no more diſpleaſed with thy wayes and doings than thy ſelf) *but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.* As confeſſion is a duty, ſo the Spirit furniſhes the awakened ſinner with abundant matter. *His tranſgreſſions are with him, as for his iniquities he knows them.*

The book of Conſcience is opened which before was kept claſped. And Oh how many leaves are written as it were on both ſides; and in them ſins committed in ſuch places, with ſuch company, with ſuch aggravations, are recorded: beſides infinitely more committed alone, and in the thought, deſire and deſign. The ſight of ſin is needful: till this be ſeen and felt, Chriſt will never be hearkned after. And eſpecially there muſt be a conviction of the unreaſonableneſs, danger, evil of the ſin of unbelief in former deafneſs to calls, and rejecting of Chriſt offered. This ſinning againſt the remedy, makes ſin the more exceeding ſinful.

4. Thoſe whom the Lord calls; *he particularly by the Spirit of bondage applies the curſe*

curse to him. And this is done sometimes with a great deal of horror. Sin is represented to them, as well deserving of, as justly exposing them to, the curse and wrath of God. As their iniquities are set in order before them; so the terrors of the Lord do sometimes set themselves in array against them. They are made to perceive and acknowledge they are accursed. Not only in the general, *that the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*, Rom. 1. 18. but they are caused to apply the threatnings to themselves, *as if God had spoken particularly to them from Heaven by Name*, and told them that their way is perverse, because so contrary to his will; and that they are the children of his indignation.

Those Scriptures, *Wo to the wicked it shall be ill with him; Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law to do them. Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil:* have an amazing sound in the ears of those who are awakened. Though indeed some are called with less terror than others are. The Spirit blows more gently upon some; when they are called and converted; upon

on others, like a mighty rushing wind; and they fear they shall be even blown away to Hell; though the design of the Lord is only to loosen them from their wrong foundations; that they may build so as never to be shaken.

5. Those whom the Lord calls, *he shews them how all wayes of flying from the curse are shut up, but one only.* They will be trying the wrong, before they take the right course. The Prodigal when he had spent all, would fain have got a livelihood by his own strength; *he joyns himself to the Citizen,* before he would come again to his father, *Luke* 15. 15. In like manner, those whom the Lord is calling, and to that end awakening, They will have recourse to their own strength, to their own righteousness and duties; and think by this means to make amends for what they have done amiss: but the Lord beats them off from such a foolish and vain self-confidence.

The Lord shews them *that the Law is weak because of their flesh*, Rom. 8. 3. Their flesh hinders them from being able to yield perfect obedience to the Law, and so from obtaining life by it. Their own strength is weakness; their own righteousness

neſs cannot ſatisfie for the very imperfection of it ſelf; much leſs for the abounding iniquities that have been committed. This alſo is diſcovered, that God himſelf though able to ſave, yet will not do it without a Mediator: no coming near this holy and righteous Majeſty without an Advocate, who is holy, harmleſs and undefiled. Thus all other wayes are ſtopt; and we are ſaid to *be ſhut up unto faith*, Gal. 3. 23.

6. Thoſe whom the Lord calls, *he diſcovers his Son Chriſt to them*; and in him a willingneſs to be reconciled; and cryes to them to come to him. After the Law hath thundered the curſe in ſinners ears, how moving is the voice of the Goſpel, *calling the weary and heavy laden to come to Chriſt for reſt?* Mat. 11. 28. telling them, that if they will come to Chriſt when called, he will make their peace with God, that he will cover all their ſin, and turn away all the anger of God though provoked to never ſo great a fierceneſs. This is like an Haven to the almoſt ſhipwrackt in a ſtorm, or a Cord caſt out to thoſe that are ready to be drowned. How encouraging are thoſe invitations, *He every one that*

thirsteth, come to the waters! Whosoever will, let him drink of the water of life freely! Rev. 22. 17.

7. Those whom the Lord calls, *he not only invites, but enables them to come to Jesus Christ; by accepting of him, and submission to him.* Every one that is truly called, is indeed taught of God. And hark what Christ sayes, John 6. 45. *Every one that hath heard, and learned of the Father cometh unto me.* The effectually called, are effectually drawn by the Father to the Son. God hath exalted Christ to be a Prince and a Saviour, *Acts* 5. 31. and they accept him as Prince and Saviour. Down goes the dominion of sin, the strong holds of Satan, the former idolizing of the world, and confidence in the flesh. They are willing Christ should do what he will with them; and be as much as he pleases, even wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption to them.

8. Those whom the Lord calls, *by Christ he brings them home to himself.* They hearken and obey the call to return; and they return to *him*, even *to him*, Jer. 3. 1. *If thou wilt return O Israel saith the Lord,*

return

return unto me. God is in their eye when they return, that he may be theirs, their ſhield, their reward, their portion, their all: The effectually called perceive the folly and danger of eſtrangement from God, their hearts are ſo changed, and renewed, as to chooſe him for their chiefeſt good: they turn to him, and 'tis their vehement deſire, that they may never return to folly more. Thus of the method and manner of this calling.

In the ſecond place I am to ſhew *wherein the truth of this calling lyes.* Something of this may be known by what hath already been ſpoken; but I ſhall further declare it in theſe following things.

1. They that are called truly, *are called out of darkneſs into marvellous light,* 1 Pet. 2. 9. *But ye are a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar people, that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him who hath called you out of darkneſs into his marvelous light.* This light is marvellous, if we conſider the darkneſs that went before: Uncalled ones in the abſtract are named *Darkneſs,* Eph. 5. 8. *For ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye light in the Lord.* And this darkneſs in the unrege-

nerate is the worſe, becauſe darkneſs is loved, and light hated. And is it not marvelous, the light ſhould break in upon them?

This light is marvelous in regard of the marvel it fills them with. They marvel that ſo great an evil as ſin ſhould have its evil concealed from them; that their ſo great danger ſhould be kept undiſcovered. that ſo great a good as God ſhould not at all be apprehended or ſought after.

This light hath heat going along with it, therefore both the Word and Spirit are compared *to a lamp* that burns as well as ſhines. This light affects and awes the heart, ſo that there is a ſtop put to the allowed works of darkneſs. Knowledge and faith, and both with power; are in the room of ignorance and infidelity.

2. Thoſe that are called truly, are *called from confidence in themſelves to the Lord our righteouſneſs.* This name is given to Chriſt, *Jer.* 23. 6. To hinder fleſh from truſting, or glorying in it ſelf, is one great deſign upon which God hath ſpoken to us in the Goſpel. 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. therefore the Apoſtle to take off *Iſrael* from truſting in themſelves, and a righteouſneſs of their own;

own; affirms that they only are indeed the *Circumcision that Worship God in the Spirit, rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*, Phil. 3. 3.

It may seem a Paradox, but 'tis most certain, *That the Gospel preaches up righteousness, and yet doth cry it down.* It preaches up the practice of righteousness, and sayes that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. But withal it preaches down trusting in this righteousness; as if sin were pardoned, or our persons justified for the sake of it.

One that is called, is made to see, that his own righteousness would stand him in small stead, if the Lord should mark what is done amiss. When the Law sayes, *Thou hast sinned, and thou must dye*: 'tis not enough to say, *I have heard, I have prayed, I have done several good works*: the plea must be; *though I have sinned, Christ hath died, to be the propitiation for my sins; and who now can lay any of my sins unto my charge?* Rom. 8. 33, 34.

3. They that are called truly, *are called from bondage unto liberty*, Gal. 5. 13. *For Brethren ye have been called unto liberty.* This freedom is a freedom indeed, and

only those are free indeed, whom the Son makes so. The ungodly man who never obeyed the call of the Gospel, is not a freeman; though in a Civil sense he was freeborn, and by a forreign Enemy was never brought into bondage, yet he is not free: because the creatures are his Lords, for they command his affections; his fleshly and worldly lusts make a meer slave of him, and Satan by means of his corruptions, lead him captive.

Add to this; His heart is in bondage by fear of affliction, death, wrath; every time his conscience is at all awakened. But the effectually called are set at liberty; they are presently made free from guilt, from the curse; their lusts and Satan can no longer enslave them as formerly. The golden chains of wealth, the silken cords of pleasures, cannot hold them fast; as so many *Sampsons* they snap these asunder. And though doubts and fears may for a while, and at some seasons prevail; yet the work of faith being carried on with greater power, these doubts and fears will vanish away, and they come to God with a childlike confidence and freedome.

4. They

4. They that are called truly, *are called from ſin to holineſs*, 1 Theſſ. 4. 7. *For God hath not called us to uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs*: the Apoſtle affirms, that the believing *Romans* were called to be Saints, Rom. 1. 7. *To all that be in* Rome *beloved of God, called to be Saints.* All the effectually called are made partakers of the Divine Nature; they put on that new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. They are turned from Swine to Sheep; they are no longer the Herd of Satan, but the Flock of Chriſt; and no longer like, but abhorr the mire which before they wallowed in. They loath themſelves becauſe of their abominations; ſin becauſe ſo defiling and unſuitable to the Lords kindneſs, is become abominable; but they behold a beauty in holineſs. Their hearts are in ſome meaſure purified, and an higher degree of purity is deſired and aimed at; and the purity of their hearts manifeſts it ſelf in the cleanneſs of their hands.

The looſe unholy profeſſors, how vain are all their pretences of being called? they are not indeed called by the Lord, becauſe Satan can call them to ſome ſins

which they know of; and they willingly do yield obedience to him.

5. They that are called truly, *are called from discord and trouble unto peace.* Col. 3. 14, 15. *And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body and be ye thankful.* So 1 Cor. 7. 15. *But God hath called us to peace.* God hath called believers unto peace with himself, and how sweet that is, the troubled conscience that hath its wounds healed, can tell you. God hath called them unto peace among themselves.

Love and peace where is the place of your abode! Have you indeed left the earth, and confined your selves to the heavenly mansions? Alas, that the Church on earth should be militant in regard of the variance among themselves, as well as the combates they are engaged in with the enemies of their salvation. Oh when will the members of the same body, live as members of Christ, and of one another! How shall we prove our selves Disciples, without this love? How shall we prove our selves the children of the God of peace, unless we are of a peaceable

able and healing Spirit? Oh that there were more of that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easie to be entreated!

6. They that are called truly, *are called from earth to heaven.* Upon this score 'tis styled an *heavenly calling*, Heb. 3. 1. and a *calling to eternal glory*, 1 Pet. 5. 10. God sayes to the hearts of the effectually called, *Come up hither*: and as there is a spiritual resurrection, so also an ascension; they rise and are set with Christ; and their affection is set on things above, not on things upon the earth. *Col.* 3. 1, 2. A better and an enduring substance hath been discovered to them; no wonder if the world, the fashion whereof and the lusts whereof pass away, is contemned. They who are effectually called, are no losers by obeying that call. There is a promise made to the called of an eternal inheritance; of a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God: and what are the transitory vanities under the Sun, compared with these good things which are so solid and so permanent?

In

In the third place follows the reason why the Lord doth thus call; and 'tis twofold.

1. The principal reason is, *because he will*: so it seems good in his sight: he is gracious, because he will be gracious. Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us by the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.* So Joh. 1. 13. *Who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Though we be born noble, or of believing parents, there is need of being born again. Therefore the blood we come of, is not sufficient to make a change in our natures. Nor can the will of the flesh effect this; for the flesh is opposite unto, and lusteth against the Spirit; and endeavours to hinder the work of regeneration. Neither can the will of man; those that most do shew themselves reasonable men; whose wills do act in the most refined way, and put forth the greatest strength, that meer nature can administer to them; yet they cannot call or raise themselves from the dead, or make themselves new creatures. 'Tis the Lord that doth it, and his own will doth move him to it.

Two

Two things are here to be observed.

1. *That foreseen works do not move him to call.* 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* Thus the Lord foresees no works that are good in us; but what he intends to work himself after he hath wrought a change. *From him, our fruit is found*; he works all our works in us, and for us; he fills us with all the fruits of righteousness; which therefore are said to be to *the praise and glory of God by Jesus Christ*, Phil. 1. 11. not only because he is obeyed and honoured by the doing of them; but also because he gives strength to do them by Jesus Christ, *who strengthened the Apostle to do all things*, Phil. 4. 13.

2. *Neither doth foreseen faith move the Lord to call*; for faith is *the gift of God.* Eph. 2. 8. He could foresee nothing in the Saints, but ignorance and unbelief; till by the same power whereby he raised up Christ from the dead, himself should be the author of faith in them. So that it remains undoubted, that the Lord calls,

because

because he will; that's the principal and first reason.

2. Another reason also may be assigned, because *by this calling, his elect are fitted for that glory which he hath designed to bring them to.* If they should come to Heaven with unchanged hearts, 'twould be no Heaven to them: Therefore they are called, and renewed, and sanctified, that their Spirits may be suited unto that truest blessedness, which above is reserved for them. The Apostle blesses and gives thanks to the Father, for making the *Colossians meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*; and how were they made meet? 'Twas by being called, *and delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of the Son of God.*

None are admitted to the inheritance, but those who are made meet for it, and those are made meet who are called to be Saints; who cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light; who having also put on the Lord Jesus Christ, make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. I come now to the Uses that may be made of the Doctrine.

Use

Use 1. of Consolation, to them that are indeed called. These four considerations, may yield them abundant consolation.

1. *Their effectual calling proves them vessels of mercy and of honour.* Notable is that advice of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.* What can we ascend up into Heaven, and open the Book of Gods eternal purpose; that we are bid to make sure our election? No. But we are commanded first to make sure our calling, and from our calling we may undeniably argue to our election. Thus *Paul* doth argue the election of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thess. 1. 4 *Knowing brethren beloved, your election of God*; and the reason follows, V. 5. 6. *For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.*

If you are called, this calling is a fruit of a love everlasting; 'tis an evident sign that God had thoughts of kindness towards you, before you were; nay, before the world was. And how can that love in time

time be altered, which notwithstanding the fore-knowledge of all that you would do, did pitch it self upon you? You may conclude, *that God hath not appointed you to wrath, but to obtain salvation*, 1 Thess. 5. 9. What sweetness and comfort doth it yield to them that are called, to consider how they have been loved from all eternity; and what a blessed and glorious design God had upon them before he made them.

2. Those that are called, *are also justified.* Moreover sayes the Apostle, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; *and whom he called, them he also justified.* Rom. 8. 30. There is not one sin of theirs, but is transferred unto their Surety the Lord Jesus; and thereby their sins are all forgiven, are all covered; *When they come to be sought for, none of them shall be found.* Jer. 50 20. *In those dayes, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for; and there shall be none: and the sins of* Judah, *and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve.* How can they be found, since they are removed from those that are pardoned, as far as the East is from the West, *Psal.* 103. 12.

Justification, which implies that sin is blotted

blotted out, that the anger of God is appeased, and that our persons in the Beloved are accepted; is one great benefit which Christ aimed at the procuring of when he died; and truly unless we are justified, no other saving benefit can be received. Now to be thus justified, is the priviledge of them that are called: they have received the atonement, they are made nigh by the blood of Jesus: there is now no condemnation to them. The Law, Conscience, Satan, may all be silenced with this; *Christ hath dyed*: and though enemies never so much, yet by his death, they are reconciled to God. With what boldness may they look all their enemies, and even death it self in the face, since they may come to the Throne of Grace, and look God in the face with boldness? *Heb.* 4. *ult.*

3. This effectual calling *is a gift that God never repents of*, Rom. 11. 29. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. If the Jews who were once called, and are now so deeply apostatized, shall yet notwithstanding be again recovered, and grafted into their own Olive-tree, we may certainly conclude, that those who are savingly wrought upon, notwithstanding

ing declinings, shall be healed of their backslidings; and shall not be suffered to prove final cast-awayes.

Art thou called? God hath given thee a treasure which he will never take away from thee. *Renatus nunquam denascitur*; One that is born again by the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, never becomes unborn, never degenerates into unregeneracy. Why is the *seed said to be incorruptible, the word to abide for ever?* 1 Pet. 1. 23. but because spiritual life is perpetuated, till swallowed up in that life which is eternal. Let the called comfort themselves with this: He that hath called them *is faithful, and therefore will preserve their whole Spirits, and souls and bodies blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thess. 5. 23, 24.

4. If called, 'tis certain *that they shall be glorified.* They are now called to the seeking, to the belief, and hope of glory: and their faith and hope shall not make them ashamed; their seeking shall not be in vain. 2 Thess. 2. 13, 14. *But sayes the Apostle, we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you*

you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. That glory that Christ is entred upon, the Saints are called to. Joint-purchasers indeed they are not with Christ of the glorious inheritance, for Christ alone paid the price for it; but they are joint-heirs with Christ, and they shall be joint-possessors with him; and be glorified together: *Rom.* 8. 17.

Use 2. of Caution: *Take heed of resting in a common call,* which falls short of that which is effectual: you may be called in some sense, and yet perish; nay, perish the more miserably: because when called you did not fully yield to it. Here that you may be cautioned the better, I shall do two things. First, *Shew how far the ineffectually called may go.* Secondly, *Wherein they fail*; that you may not set up your Staff with those, but go beyond them.

First, I am to shew how far the ineffectually called may go.

1. The ineffectually called *do hear the joyful sound of the Gospel, and may sit under powerful means.* Prophets, Apostles, nay,

Christ himself was heard by such as these. Many reprobates at the great Day will say, *Lord thou hast taught in our Streets*, Luke 13. 26. The light shines about them, the great salvation, which 'tis so great a sin to neglect, is preached to them; and as I intimated already, the self same means are vouchsafed them, which being received and improved, are mighty and powerful to the conversion of others.

2. *The ineffectually called may profess.* They may cry *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these*, Jer. 7. 4. They may call themselves the Lords people; and not only speak thus to men; but say Lord, Lord, to Christ himself: But notwithstanding this profession of subjection, they are not really subject, Luke 6. 46. *And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say.*

3. The ineffectually called *may attain to a great measure of notional knowledge.* Satan is a knowing Spirit; and many may be knowing who are under his power, and are made use of by him. *Balaam* knew much; but his knowledge availed him nothing as long as he loved the wages of unrighteousness; *Demas* was excellently instructed in the Christian faith; he not only

ly heard, but preached the Gospel; therefore *Paul* reckons him among his fellow-labourers, *Philem.* 24. Yet *Demas* was never effectually wrought on, for he loved this present world, and forsook Christ for the worlds sake. How many are in Hell who had much knowledge, taking gifts; because their knowledge and gifts did puff them up, and to walk humbly and closely with the Lord was not their care.

4. The ineffectually called *may be sometimes startled, and endure great pangs of legal terrors.* Oh the trouble of Spirit that *Judas* was in, when he had betrayed his Lord! The conscience of a reprobate may fly in his face, and fill him with a legal sorrow, because of that curse, that vengeance, to which by sin he hath made himself liable. Rest not in the work of the Law; ye are not truly called, till the Gospel hath had an operation upon you. The unsound may be more terrified, than sincere converts. But converts beg to have their consciences made more sensible; the unsound would fain have their consciences again stupified; that the prick of remorse might not trouble them in their working of iniquity.

5. The ineffectually called *may be forward in religious duties.* A respect to their gain,

or a respect to their credit, may produce this forwardness. Some Disciples flocked after our Lord *for the loaves* sake, that cared not *for the bread of life*, Joh. 6.26,27. The plausible abilities of the Preacher may draw many Auditors. *Ezekiels* hearers did delight to sit under his Ministry: they were pleased much with his taking way of delivery, but their hearts did still covet the world and the things of the world, Ezek. 33. 31, 32. *With their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness, and lo, thou art to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.* Perhaps also, meerly to silence the conscience, duties may be performed; and then the duties are rested in, and not Christ, who alone can make them acceptable.

6. The ineffectually called *may do many things, and have a name that they live.* Where the vocation is not effectual, there may be a partial reformation; nay, they may be almost perswaded to be Christians indeed; thus far was *Agrippa* wrought upon. And they may come within a little of the Kingdom of God, and yet fall short of that Kingdom.

Now

Now Secondly, I am to shew wherein the ineffectually called fail.

1. *They will not consent to have every lust slain*; their hearts cannot close with that Petition of the Psalmist, *Let no iniquity have dominion over me*, Psal. 119.133. Love to their ease made the stony ground to give out in time of temptation. The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, hindred the thorny ground from bringing forth any fruit unto perfection.

2. They are not willing *to receive whole Christ*, if they were they would have power to become the sons of God, *John* 1. 12. and would have life by him: sometimes they quarrel at his righteousness, and will set up their own: sometimes they are offended at the strictness of his commands; or self-denyal or the Cross make them offended, their whole hearts they will not yield that whole Christ should be admitted.

3. Those that are ineffectually called fail in this; *that they will not choose the Lord to be their portion*: In their profession they have an eye at other things: God is not look't upon as a suitable happiness, which argues that their hearts were never changed, and that the creature is idolized by

them, but the Creator neglected.

Doubting Saints are apt to be discouraged, when they hear how far the unsound may go. But let them be encouraged, as long as every sin is hated, as long as they are willing to receive Christ, whole Christ in every office, as long as they had rather have the Lord to be their portion, than to have the whole world in their possession; certainly they go beyond all the hypocrites and unsound hearted whatever.

Use 3. of Counsel to them that are only externally called: Now at last give more earnest heed to the things which you have heard.

1. *Pray for an hearing Ear, and an understanding Spirit.* *Solomon* tells us, that the seeing eye and the hearing ear the Lord hath made even both of them.

2. *Beg that your hearts may be bowed, and become obedient, and brought under the power of the Lords call.* Urge him to give the new heart which he hath promised; to work in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

3. *Be deaf to what before you were attentive.* Learn of the Serpent, stop your ears when Satan is striving to charm you into his

his temptations. His design in charming, is to ruine you. If sinners entice you, consent not to them. If any would draw you into error, or prejudice you against Ordinances, and holy and circumspect walking; do not regard, but avoid them.

4. *Content not your selves with good beginnings*: Continue in the Word, then you will prove your calling real, and that you are indeed Disciples, *John* 8. 31.

Use 4. of Advice to truly called ones.

1. *Shew forth the praises of him that hath called you.* He hath done that for you, which he hath done for few in the world: he hath made you new creatures; he hath made you children, he hath set his heart upon you, he hath entered into a covenant with you; he hath given you of his sure mercies, and he intends to give you more than now can enter into your hearts, so much as to conceive. What high and unreasonable ingratitude will it be, if you do not wonder at, and magnifie the riches of his grace, and his abundant mercy.

2. *Let this be your desire to be called more and more effectually.* Though the work is true in you, yet 'tis not perfect: Oh let perfection be aimed at. Long to be called

more compleatly off from temptation, from the creature, from all self-confidence: & to be drawn still nearer and nearer to the Lord. Let it be the request of your very souls; that this may be the effect of every word, of every Ordinance, of every Providence. I should also advise you to walk as the called of God. But of this I am to speak in the last Doctrine, which now I am come to: and

Doct. 7. The last Doctrine is this: *'Tis the great duty of those that are called to walk worthy of their vocation.* I beseech you, sayes the Apostle, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. This in other places is expressed by *having our light shining before men; that they seeing our good works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 5. 16. and by *having such a conversation as becomes the Gospel*, Phil. 1. 27. *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ Jesus.*

In the handling of this Doctrine, I shall first shew what's implyed in this Metaphor of walking: Secondly, What 'tis to walk worthy of our vocation or calling: Thirdly, Produce several reasons, why to walk worthy of our calling, is our duty: Lastly, Conclude with the Application.

In

In the first place I am to shew what's implied in this Metaphor of walking.

In the general; *To be sure more than bare talking or professing is required.* Many have God in their mouths, when his love and his fear are not in their hearts; and they live as without him in the world. *They profess that they know God, but in their works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* Tit. 1. 16.

Good words are indeed much to be approved of, when they are not spoken out of design, to gain a reputation of Religion; when they proceed from the abundance of goodness and holiness in the heart: when the heart loves God, and upon this score delights to be speaking of him, and for him: and if it be thus, then speaking well, will be joyned with a sincere care to do well. But if this care be wanting, though folks call themselves the Lords people, and speak of the Lords Temple, and of the Lords Ordinances; all signifies nothing, but that their hypocrisie is great, and their judgement will be heavy.

Though faith in the Gospel be preached up, and though by faith without the deeds

of

of the Law we are juſtified before God; *Rom.* 3. 28. yet faith that is true, is alwayes accompanied with obedience to the Law. Heark to the Apoſtle, Tit. 3. 8. *This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will that you affirm conſtantly, that they that have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.* Chriſt is not the Miniſter of ſin, neither doth he give encouragement to it, but hath threatned, that they who walk perverſly, and are workers of iniquity, ſhall be made to depart at the great day, and ſhall be ſhut out of his Kingdom.

But to ſpeak more diſtinctly; ſeveral particulars are implied in this walking ſpoken of in the Text, and which elſewhere is frequently uſed to expreſs the courſe of a believer.

1. When we walk, *there is ſomething that we go from and leave.* The Saint doth leave his carnal courſes, and his carnal company; he doth not faſhion himſelf according to the former luſts in his ignorance, the luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eyes, and the pride of life, which are not of the Father, but are of the world, 1 *John* 2. 16. he renounces, and deſires to have them mortified; and yet he doth not confide

fide in any thing done by him, or wrought in him, but in Christ alone, for pardon and acceptation with God.

2. When we walk *there is a place we go to.* And whether is the Saint travelling? Verily towards the *New Jerusalem.* He looks upon himself as a Stranger and Pilgrim; Heaven is the home that he would be at. By faith he sees, and seeing he desires, and desiring he strives to enter and possess that City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, *Heb.* 11. 10.

3. When we walk, we *cannot come to the place we are to go unto, unless we leave that we were at before.* And truly the Saint sees a necessity of being weaned from the world, of casting away sin, because his lusts reigning and delighted in, he cannot carry in the way to Heaven with him. We cannot serve God and Mammon: What concord can there be between Christ and *Belial? Darius* after he had been beaten by *Alexander*, would willingly have shared the *Persian* Empire with him; but *Alexander* made this reply, That in the Firmament there is but one Sun; and so in an Empire, there must be but one Emperour; meaning that himself and not *Darius* should be the person. In the Throne of the heart there

there must be but one Lord, the Lord Jesus and not sin. Christ and Satan go in contrary paths; if Christ be followed, Satan must of necessity be resisted.

4. When we walk *there is a way we walk in.* And the Word of God is the Saints path: this he chooses, and desires to be preserved from deviations, Psal. 119. 35. *Make me to go in the path of thy Commandments, for therein do I delight.* Christ indeed in some sense is styled the Way; because there is no access to the Father, no coming into the Holy of Holies into Heaven, but by him: and besides by his Spirit he strengthens us to walk, else we should not be able to move Heaven-ward. But the Word of Christ directs us what is to be done, shews us what is pleasing in the Lords eyes; therefore our steps must be ordered in it, Psal. 119. 133. *Order my steps in thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*

5. Our motion in this way must have these properties; it must be *deliberate*; it must be *voluntary*; it must be *continued.*

1. *Our motion in the Lords way must be deliberate.* We must count the cost before hand, consider the inconveniencies, and sufferings we may be exposed to; but the strength

ſtrength that is promiſed, the preſent comfort, and future reſt, which are promiſed, muſt encourage us againſt all difficulties. Many that begin to walk, give out, becauſe they think not before hand of the diſcouragements, they are likely to meet with; and with what encouragements to overcome them.

2. *Our motion muſt be voluntary.* We muſt not only be *thruſt* into this way by the violent impulſes of an awakened and enlightned conſcience; but our hearts being changed, our wills renewed, muſt chooſe this path as being ſafe and ſweet, and infinitely to be preferred, before the deſtructive paths of ſin. *Davids* will was thus renewed, when he ſaid, *I have choſen the way of truth; thy judgements have I laid before me*, Pſal. 119. 30.

3. *Our motion in the Lords way muſt be continued.* The righteous are ſaid to hold on their way, and they that have clean hands to grow ſtronger and ſtronger. *David* profeſſes he had *ſtuck unto the Lords teſtimonies*, Pſal. 119. 31. This indeed is right running, when we run and are not weary; this is right walking, when we walk without fainting, *Iſa.* 40. *ult.*

In

In the ſecond place I am to ſhew what 'tis to walk worthy of our calling. Before I explain this, 'twill be neceſſary to premiſe two things.

1. *That our walking when never ſo exact, hath nothing of merit at all in it.* Worthy of our calling, as was hinted before, is as much as ſuitable to our calling; not that by any thing we do, we can lay claim to a reward, which is given purely of grace. Evil works indeed are truly meritorious of puniſhment; upon which account, death is ſaid to be *the wages of ſin*; but in the ſame Verſe the Apoſtle alters his phraſe, and ſayes not, that Heaven is the wages of holineſs: but affirms, *That the gift of God is eternal life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Rom. 16. ult.

Eternal life is freely beſtowed; and not upon the account of any thing that we do, but through Jeſus Chriſt. When we have done our beſt, we are but unprofitable ſervants; our ſervice is unprofitable unto God, to whom our goodneſs cannot extend, or add any thing unto; and it would be unprofitable to our ſelves, were it not for Chriſt, by whom what we do is rendred acceptable, 1 Pet. 2. 5. *Offer up ſpiritual Sa-*

Sacrifice, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.

2. Another thing to be premised is this, *That when we walk most worthy of our calling, we walk not so worthy as we should. In many things we offend all, and puts himself into the number.* Jam. 2. 2. Those that really have the Spirit, have the flesh lusting against the Spirit in them; and these are contrary one to the other, *Gal.* 5. 17. So that they cannot do the things which they would: the flesh hinders them from doing the good which the Spirit would: the Spirit hinders them from doing the evil which the flesh would have done by them.

'Tis good to be sensible of our defects; that we may be humble, see our need of Christ, that being compleat in him, we may be presented holy and unblameable in the Fathers eyes. If we dream of a perfection we have attained to, it will make us lazy; we shall think we have something, when we have nothing, and deceive our selves. The Apostle when he was near the end of his race, and had laboured more abundantly than all his fellows, yet acknowledges he had *not attained, neither was already perfect*; and this makes him to forget the things behind, and to press towards

wards the mark, for the prize of the high calling, *Phil.* 3. 12, 14.

This I speak as to prevent sloth, so to prevent discouragement. Defects in obedience, which are bewailed, striven against, are consistent with grace. So that when all comes to all, we must have recourse to our surety the Lord Jesus, that in his perfect obedience imputed to us, our consciences may rest satisfied; we being sincere, notwithstanding our infirmities.

These two things being premised, let us see in these particulars what 'tis to walk worthy of our calling.

1. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk agreeably to the Light that shines in them.* They have heard not only Ministers, but Christ in the Ministers, and have been *taught by him as the truth is in Jesus*, Eph. 4. 21. What is it to know the truth as 'tis in Jesus, or in a saving manner? I answer, 'Tis to have the truth made evident to us by the Spirit of Jesus; and to have strength conveyed from Jesus, for the practising of truth discovered. The called know their Masters will effectually; and they see 'tis reasonable they should do the will of such a Master, all whose precepts are

are so much for their own profit.

Many have the light, but walk not while they have the light; and at last darkness comes upon them. These do not consider Gods design in holding the light of his Word to them: 'tis not that they should play, but work by it. That expression of the *Psalmist* plainly intimates, that practice is the end why knowledge is given, Psal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* *Davids* path was such, as the light of the Word shewed him; and his steps were ordered suitably to that Words direction. Thus we are commanded to walk as children of light proving what's acceptable to the Lord, *Ephes.* 5. 8, 10.

2. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk answerably to that grace and love that's manifested towards them.* They consider they have greater obligations lying upon them, than the rest of the children of men. There was a time when they were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures; and so were extreamly hateful in the Lords eyes, *Tit.* 3. 3. But now the time of love is come, and rich mercy hath been expressed in begetting them

again to a lively hope. Formerly they had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy; therefore the greater obligation lies upon them to abstain from fleshly lusts, to have their conversation honest, and by good works to be a conviction to the Gospels enemies, 1 *Pet.* 2. 10, 11, 12.

How should they study to please and glorifie that God who pitied them, who hath catcht them as brands out of the fire that is unquenchable; in which they deserved to be burned. The Lord hath forgiven them all their trespasses, they had run millions upon the score; but with the blood of Christ he hath wiped all away: he hath made them new creatures: and this love ought to be, and is, unto the called, a strong engagement to walk in newness of life.

3. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk suitably to the Relation in which they stand.* And we may consider them in a threefold relation; As *children of God*: as *members of Christ*; as *brethren one to another.*

1. *They walk as children of God.* God is their Father, and they honour him; as dear children they follow him, *Eph.* 5. 1. as obedient children, they are employed about their

their Fathers business; and if through temptation they are drawn to offend their Father, because their Father is offended, they are grieved, and they cannot go on in a course of disobedience as others do unto the end; but their Spirits are restless, and cannot be satisfied, till their Father hath spoken peace to them, and told them by his Word and Spirit, that his anger which by their folly and relapses they had stirred up is turned away.

2. *They walk as members of Christ*: Deriving Grace and Spirit from their Head, and growing up into him. The body of Christ is not arrived to his full stature, as 'twill be when 'tis all glorified; but every member on earth is still growing, and aspiring to compleatness. The called walk as Christ walked: for the same Spirit that acted him, abides in them for ever. They aim at their Heads honour: *They seek the things of Christ*, and check themselves when they seek their own; if their fellow members suffer, they sympathize; and if their fellow members be honoured, they rejoyce, 1 *Cor.* 12. 26. because their Head is hereby advanced, as well as their fellow members encouraged. Indeed they are not without some stirrings of envy; but this tormenting

ing sin, they hate and resist, because a sin so Satanical, as well as a torment so exceeding grievous.

3. *They walk as brethren one to another.* And truly the Holy Ghost in this Text hath a special reference to this walking in brotherly love and unity. Ephes. 4. 2, 3. *With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Our wisdom, our safety lies much in loving as brethren; besides the lovelinesse of thus walking.

We are walking to the same home, why should we fall out by the way? What though we differ in some things? Shall our zeal for our Opinions which may prove errors and mistakes, be hotter than our love to our brethren, which Christ so often presses? Oh that the Apostle were minded, who forbids perverse disputes, and strifes of words. and sayes, *Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing; and if in any thing we be otherwise minded: God shall reveal even this unto us,* Phil. 3. 15, 16.

4. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk after that Spirit who hath wrought*

and dwells in them. Every one that's called effectually, hath the Spirit; for the Apostle speaks expresly, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Rom. 8. 9. And the Spirit of Christ being the Spirit of holiness doth in an holy manner act all them that have received him. They shut their ears against the suggestions and temptations of the Impure Spirit, when he would turn them to the right hand or to the left; but they hearken to the voice behind them saying, *This is the way, walk in it,* Isa. 30. 21.

The Apostle exhorts us to walk in the Spirit, and not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 16. and after tells us, what are the fruits of the flesh, that we may avoid them, and what are the fruits of the Spirit, that we may be filled with them. The Spirit hath told us what his fruit is also in another place, Eph. 5. 9. *For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;* Goodness may relate to the first Table, righteousness to the second, and truth to that revelation beyond the Law, that is made in the Gospel. Those therefore that walk in the Spirit, being strengthned and guided by him, make it their business to have a conscience void of offence towards

God, and towards man: and being lead into truth, they look to Christ to be accepted in all their performances.

5. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk according to the pattern, of which they are called to the imitation.* Now the perfect pattern is Jesus Christ; who is an example, that we should follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2. 21. *For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* And *he that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk even as he walked,* 1 John 2. 6. He that cares not to be like to Christ, certainly hath no love to him, nor any interest in his love. Then indeed we walk as Christians, when we are followers of our Lord. He was holy, and harmless, and undefiled; and 'tis our beauty and our duty to resemble him. He went about doing good, and 'tis best for us to be thus employed; and whatever good we do, should be done with a good will; for our Lord counted it *his meat and drink, to do the will, and to finish the work of him that sent him,* John 4. 34.

6. They that walk worthy of their calling,

ling, *walk in those precepts and holy commands that have been delivered to them.* Many Professors indeed do hate instruction, and cast these Laws behind them. But the sincere value these Laws at an high rate; they hide them in their hearts as their treasure, and keep them very charily as the Apple of their eye, Prov. 7. 2. *The commands of God are exceeding pure*; and the life that is conformable to them being pure also; that life hath the greater Majesty and lustre upon it.

A godly man loves the Word because pure, *Psal.* 119. 140. And loving the Word, he walks according to it. He is reconciled to God, and to his duty: that enmity against the Law, which before did but irritate him to be more stiff and obstinate in his disobedience, is now cured. *The Law is put into his mind, and written in his heart*, Heb. 8. 10. So that after the inward man he delights in that which while he was unrenewed, was esteemed an intolerable yoke. There is a sweet connaturalness between the command that's holy, just and good, and the regenerate soul; so that the Law both as to what it bids and forbids, is submitted to, and that with willingness.

7. They that walk worthy of their calling, *walk suitably to the hope of their calling, and the glorious inheritance which they expect*, Eph. 1. 18. By the eye of faith they have seen the glory of another world; and through that faith they are advanced to such an holy stedfastness of Spirit, that the things of this world are strangely contemned. The Eagle, as the Proverb goes, doth not catch at Flies: and let *Beelzebub* make never so great offers to the effectually called; Their answer is, *Offer these things to thy children, whom thou hast befooled and blinded, and that know no better: for our parts we have fixt our faith to view the celestial Canaan: and we are assured that the whole world is but an empty Table, compared with it.* They live as strangers and Pilgrims on the earth, and by their weanedness from things visible (upon which so many are undone by foolish doating) declare plainly that they seek a Countrey: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City.

The calling of a Christian is styled an *High calling*. He is called from low unto high things. God himself, who is *Optimus Maximus*, is the reward he seeks; likeness

to God, is the perfection which he aims at; and a Kingdom that cannot be moved, is the dignity, which with a well-weighed, and commendable ambition he aspires unto. And Heaven being thus in his eye, he gets and keeps the world under his feet: and since 'tis but an Idol made of dirt and clay, it well deserves to be trampled on.

In the third place I am to lay down the Reasons why the called should walk worthy of their Vocation. The Reasons are these.

1. This walking is often in Scripture pressed; the Holy Ghost much insists upon it; and examples are proposed on purpose that they might be followed. When we read of *Enoch*, and *Noah* and *Abraham*, their walking with God; when we are told how *Caleb* followed the Lord fully; and *David* followed hard after him: and *Paul* pressed towards the mark; surely the language of these Examples is this, *Go thou and do likewise.* And this the Apostle plainly intimates, Phil. 3. 17. *Brethren be ye followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example.*

2. Christ died to this very end, that being redeemed from all iniquity, we might walk holy, and become zealous of good works, Tit.

2. 14. When he paid the price, he aimed at the purchasing regenerating grace as well as justifying. Therefore *Paul beseeches by the Lord Jesus, that as we have received how we ought to walk, and to please God; so we would abound more and more,* 1 Thess. 4. 1.

3. *The Lord aimed at this in our new creation*; he gave spiritual life that our operation might be answerable; nay, this walking was a thing *determined before the foundation of the world*, both these we mentioned, Eph. 2. 10. *For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

4. *Not only our Vocation is credited, but our heavenly Father is glorified by such kind of walking.* John 15. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my Disciples.*

Use 1. To inform us, *That the Christian Religion is a practical Religion.* It doth not consist only in knowing or believing, but in doing also. No Religion doth more frequently injoyn practice, nor better direct practice; nor use more powerful and perswasive arguments unto practice. Therefore Divinity is called θεοσεβεια, as well as θεολογια;

θεολογία; because obedience is the life of Christianity; and the truth is; A man is but more irreligious for knowing, if his knowledge hath not an influence upon his conversation.

Use 2. To shew *the slander of the false Prophets belonging to the Beast of Babylon*: who falsly affirm, we preach up no other but a Dead Faith. We are for walking and for working as much as they; only here lies the difference.

1. *We press those works that God himself hath appointed, not of humane invention.* Penances, Pilgrimages, and such like; because we find them not enjoyned by God, we dare not own: And what will Papists answer, when the Judge shall ask them, *Who hath required these things at your hands.?*

2. *We put no confidence in the works we do*; but Christ is our hope: 1 *Tim.* 1. 1. We hope for acceptation and salvation upon his account. The Council of *Trent* indeed thunders out *Anathema* against any that shall say, good works do not *verè mereri*, truly deserve eternal life. But the Holy Ghost hath taught us, that eternal life is a *Gift*, and all things else are *given freely*, Rom. 8. 32. We can no more deserve any

of

of the benefits which Christ hath purchased, than we could deserve that Christ himself should be given for us. God gave Christ freely, and with Christ freely all things.

Use 3. To reprove them *that do not walk worthy of their calling.* And

1. *Believers themselves in their declinings and falls are to be reprehended.* When natural distempers prevail within, the signs of them quickly appear without; the face grows pale, the liveliness of the eyes is gone; and the strength and vigour of the members is abated. And in like manner, when any spiritual malady prevails in the heart; if the first love be lost, or the first fear and tenderness be worn away, 'twill be observed and apparent in the life. If grosser falls do not ensue; the lustre at least of the conversation will be gone. Earthliness, and vanity, and frothiness, and other follies will creep upon the Saint, now languishing; and render him too too like the Hypocrite.

O ye children of Wisdom, be not so foolish, as to yield unto temptation. Let not the old Serpent beguile you, and make you eat of any fruit that is forbidden. You should adorn the Gospel. The carnal man

will not look into the Word it self; he only observes it as it appears in your lives: and the exactness of your walking is the way to make the Word venerable to him: if he perceives it hath but little efficacy upon you; he will mind it as little as before; nay, perhaps his neglect and prejudice may grow still greater. Κυριωτάτην ἔχει πίστιν τὸ ἦθος. The lives of Saints are likeliest to convince the world; and being convinced, to bring them to an entertaiment of the Gospel.

2. *Unsound Professors are also very much to be blamed.* The Apostle wept to think how these walked. Those that by gluttony and drunkenness make their belly their God: Those that glory in folly and sin, which is their shame: Those that possess neither heart nor vessel in sanctification and honour: Finally, Those that mind earthly things, as if these did principally deserve their thoughts and care; how sharp a reproof do these all need!

1. *They discover plainly that they are enemies to the Cross of Christ.* His Cross they are averse from bearing; and the vertue of his crucifixion they are strangers to; and like not to have experience of.

2. *Their*

2. *Their end will certainly be destruction*: And that destruction will be the more remarkable, because they are told how they ought to walk; and yet hate to do their so plainly discovered, and so often urged duty.

Use 3. To encourage the called to walk worthy of their calling.

1. *You will find your walking pleasant*, Prov. 3. 17. *Her wayes are wayes of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* Ask a Saint whether he would exchange his joyes with the jolliest sinner; he would answer, No. And put the question further to him; when his joyes are fullest? he will answer when his heart keeps closest unto God; when he walks most humbly; most in truth; most evenly, without halting or tyring; most worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.

2. Walking worthy of your calling, *will prove your calling to be effectual*: if you abound in the work of the Lord, 'twill evidence that you have indeed taken him to be your Master. If you follow the Shepheard in wayes of obedience, hereby 'twill be manifest you are of the number of his flock. And hark what he sayes, *His sheep that know his voice and follow him, he will give unto them life eternal*,

nal, and none ſhall pluck them out of his hands.

3. Walking worthy of your calling, *whither in the end will it bring you? Verily to that everlaſting reſt that remains for the people of God.* Think not much of the pains you take, ſince your labour will ſo quickly be over. Are any of the triumphing Saints ſorry becauſe of the diligence they uſed here on earth? No, no; they are glad they had given them a heart and ſtrength to put forth, an holy violence to ſtorm a Kingdom, ſo incomparably excelling all the Kingdoms of the world.

Let the glorious reſt be much in your eye, and then your pace will be advanced; you will not only walk, but run the race that is ſet before you. Plead the Promiſe of the Spirit, who 'tis ſaid, *ſhall cauſe you to walk in the Statutes of God:* this Spirit can *confirm the feeble knees*: often beg for might in the inward man; and that your hearts may be inflamed with love; and love will make your ſouls like *Amminadibs Chariots*; how ſwift will be your motion heaven-ward! An eye often looking within the Vail, will encourage you to preſs towards the mark; and none that ever did ſo, miſt the glorious Prize.

The End.

ERRATA.

PAge 11. line 5. for *wants*, read *counts*: p. 23. l. 10. for *we*, read *it*: p. 27. l. 3. for *withheld*, read *will hold*: p. 43. l. 1. for *him*, read *them*: p. 57. l. 25. *for love everlasting*, read *love from everlasting*: p. 50. l. 11. for *lead*, read *leads*.